

The Master's Mission: Shepherd

Matt 2:⁶ And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the leaders of Judah: because out of you will come a leader who will shepherd My people Israel.”

Shepherds are to: guard, guide, protect, provide (nourishment, refreshment, and rest)... and with a compassionate heart, “care for” their animals.

The Shepherd “motif”:

- 1) Great metaphor for leadership, care, provision; people of that culture understood...
- 2) People act like sheep... and that's not good! Isa. 53:6 We all went astray like sheep; we all have turned to our own way

“Sheep are not only dependent creatures; [they are] singularly unintelligent, prone to wandering and unable to find their way to a shepherd even when it is in sight.” (Ryker, Leland. Dictionary of Biblical Imagery)

In the East, a shepherd neither drives nor drags His sheep.

(Circle what God says He'll do...)

Ezekiel 34: 11 “For this is what the Lord GOD says: See, I Myself will search for My flock and look for them. 12 As a shepherd looks for his sheep on the day he is among his scattered flock, so I will look for My flock. I will rescue them from all the places where they have been scattered on a cloudy and dark day. 13 I will bring them out from the peoples, gather them from the countries, and bring them into their own land. I will shepherd them on the mountains of Israel, in the ravines, and in all the inhabited places of the land. 14 I will tend them with good pasture, and their grazing place will be on Israel's lofty mountains. There they will lie down in a good grazing place; they will feed in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. 15 I will tend My flock and let them lie down.” This is the declaration of

the Lord GOD. 16 “I will seek the lost, bring back the strays, bandage the injured, and strengthen the weak, but I will destroy the fat and the strong. I will shepherd them with justice.

Psalms 23

Luke 15:3-7

God doesn't have to “leave” the 99...

And get this... you don't “have to” follow... He invites you... it's a privilege... you “get to”...

An infinite God invites YOU to an intimate relationship with Him...

John 10:11-13, 14-15

So, on the surface, we have Jesus as shepherd – Are you following this “Good Shepherd”?

What are you doing to “know His voice” and distinguish it from all other voices?

What are you doing to “stay with the flock”?

Do you see a need for an attitude shift?

Do you feel like you “have to” ...?

Jesus is the Infinitely powerful and Infinitely Good Shepherd who desires and invites us to an intimate relationship with Him – in spite of us being “singularly unintelligent and prone to wander”...

How our lives would change if we understood the privilege of walking with Christ!

“Are You Coming?”